

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A groping operation apparatus, comprising:
a display device having a display screen;
a touch panel, which is provided on the display screen, for outputting the positional information indicating a contact point on the touch panel that is touched by the operator;
specifying means for specifying an action commanded by the operator touching the touch panel in accordance with the positional information; and
control means for outputting a control signal in accordance with an output of said specifying means,
wherein in that said specifying means detects said contact point moved from one end portion of said touch panel to another end portion, with the end portions located at four corner areas of said touch panel, on the basis of said positional information, and said action commanded by said operator is specified from a movement start end portion and a movement termination end portion of said detected contact point, so that the operator can specify the action without seeing the screen by using the movement between the two end portions.

2. (Currently Amended) A groping operation apparatus, comprising:
a display device having a display screen;
a touch panel, which is provided on said display screen, for outputting the positional information indicating a contact point on said touch panel that is touched by the operator;

specifying means for specifying an action commanded by the operator touching said touch panel in accordance with the positional information; and

control means for outputting a control signal in accordance with an output of said specifying means,

wherein said specifying means detects said contact point moved from one end portion of said touch panel to another end portion, with the end portions located at an almost central area and four corner areas of said touch panel, on the basis of said positional information, and said action commanded by said operator is specified from a movement start end portion and a movement termination end portion of said detected contact point, so that the operator can specify the action without seeing the screen by using the movement between the two end portions.

3. (Currently Amended) A groping operation apparatus, comprising:

a display device having a display screen;

a touch panel, which is provided on said display screen, for outputting the positional information indicating a contact point on said touch panel that is touched by the operator;

specifying means for specifying an action commanded by the operator touching said touch panel in accordance with the positional information; and

control means for outputting a control signal in accordance with an output of said specifying means,

wherein said specifying means detects said contact point moved along a peripheral portion of said display screen, on the basis of said positional information, and said action commanded by said operator is specified from a movement start position and a movement termination position of said detected contact point, so that the operator can specify the action without seeing the screen by using the movement between the start position and the termination position.

4. (Original) The groping operation apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said specifying means specifies said action commanded by the operator from the number of movements of the detected contact point.

5. (Original) The groping operation apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said specifying means specifies said action commanded by the operator from the movement speed of the detected contact point.

6.-8 (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A groping operation apparatus, comprising:

a display device having a display screen;

a touch panel, which is provided on said display screen, for outputting the positional information indicating a contact point on said touch panel that is touched by the operator;

specifying means for specifying an action commanded by the operator touching said touch panel in accordance with the positional information; and

control means for outputting a control signal in accordance with an output of said specifying means,

wherein said specifying means detects said contact point that is moved along a peripheral portion of said display screen to an end portion of said touch panel after being moved on said touch panel from an area other than the peripheral portion of said touch panel to the peripheral portion of said touch panel, with the end portions located at four corner areas of said touch panel, on the basis of said positional information, and specifies the action commanded by the operator from a movement start position in said peripheral portion and a movement termination position of said detected contact point, so that the operator can specify the action without seeing the screen by using the movement between the start position and the termination position.

10. (Previously Presented) The groping operation apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said control means sends out a control signal in accordance with an output from said specifying means to an electrical device mounted on a vehicle.

11. (Previously Presented) The groping operation apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said control means sends out a control signal in accordance with an output from said specifying means to an acoustic device mounted on a vehicle to adjust the sound volume for the acoustic device.

12. (Previously Presented) The groping operation apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said control means sends out a control signal in accordance with an output from said specifying means to an acoustic device mounted on a vehicle to instruct a track number of the recording medium on which the acoustic device records or reproduces.

13. (Original) The groping operation apparatus according to claim 9, wherein when the movement of the contact point in the peripheral portion of said touch panel occurs in a longitudinal direction of said touch panel, said control means outputs a control signal for increasing or decreasing a set value of the electrical device connected to said groping operation apparatus.